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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of a study that investigated parent's views of their involvement with their children in Elementary and Secondary Educational Act (ESEA) Chapter 1 programs, in school activities, and at home. Chapter 1 students in the study were low achievers from economically disadvantaged family backgrounds in the Chicago Public Schools. There are four types of compensatory educational programs for Chapter 1 students: self-contained, pullout, pullout-in-class, and extended-day. The study examined the degree of parental involvement, the impact and effect of Chapter 1 parent-training programs on types of parental involvement, and the effect of parental involvement on children's academic achievement and school attendance. Data were collected from a survey of 212 parents from 96 Chicago public schools. Parents reported much higher levels of involvement at home than at school. Parents' ratings of their involvement with their children at home were very high and similar across Chapter 1 programs. Comparison of parents' responses across the programs indicates that parents of self-contained program students were more involved in school and with their children than were parents of students in pullout and extended-day programs. No significant positive relationship was found between parental-involvement indices and student achievement in reading, mathematics, and school attendance. However, parent involvement was significantly correlated with student achievement in a few cases. Recommendations to increase parental involvement in meaningful ways are included. (Contains 34 references and 6 tables.) (LMI)

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PARENTS' VIEWS OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT AT HOME, IN ESEA CHAPTER 1 PROGRAMS, AND AT SCHOOL: IMPACT ON PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates parents' views of their involvement with their children in ESEA Chapter 1 programs, in school activities, and at home. The impact of this involvement on parents themselves and on their children will be examined. Chapter 1 students in this study represent a large urban public school system. These students are low achievers and are from economically disadvantaged family backgrounds. There are four types of compensatory educational programs for Chapter 1 students: self-contained, pullout, pullout-in-class, and extended-day. Chapter 1 legislation requires parent involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of Chapter 1 programs, and provides necessary training and materials to develop parents' capacity to improve their children's learning in school and at home. This study looks at: (1) degree of parental involvement, (b) impact and effectiveness of Chapter 1 parent training programs on types of parental involvement, and (c) effect of parental involvement on children's academic achievement and school attendance. The findings reveal that, despite efforts, parental involvement with school is much less than it is at home. Parents' ratings of their involvement with their children at home were high and similar across Chapter 1 programs. Comparison of the responses of parents of students in the self-contained, pullout, and extended-day programs shows that parental involvement in the self-contained group significantly differs from that of other groups. No significant positive relationship was found between parental involvement indices and their children's achievement in reading, mathematics, and school attendance; however, when this relationship was examined by each program, a few significant positive relationships were found.

INTRODUCTION

"American mothers on average spend less than half an hour a day talking, explaining, or reading with their children. Fathers spend less than 15 minutes...Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. What parents do to help their children learn is more important to academic success than how well-off the family is" (Bennett, 1987, p.5).

Both home and school are recognized as important factors in the sociological and educational development of children. How important is involving parents in the schools, especially in urban schools? It is part of the restructuring of American schools.

The parent-school partnership movement has several well-known advocates at major university research centers, including Edward Zigler and Sharon Lynn Kagan of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale; Heather Weiss of the Family Research Project at Harvard; Moncrieff Cochran and his colleagues at Cornell; and Epstein of the Baltimore Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning at Johns Hopkins University. Although each scholar's project is distinct, they all emphasize three common themes: (1) providing success for all children, (2) serving the whole child (social, emotional, physical, and academic), and (3) sharing responsibility to promote the social, emotional, physical, and academic growth of the child.

James Comer, a Yale University psychiatrist, and his colleagues have been working to reform schools that serve poor and minority children. They believe that, for these schools to be effective, parents must play a major role in all aspects of school life, particularly management and governance. Comer places strong emphasis on the working relationship among the teachers, parents, and students in a democratic setting in order to promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of children (Comer, 1987).

The main reason parental involvement with the schools is so important for at-risk children is that their home and school worlds are so different. "The predictable consequences in such situations are that children usually embrace the familiar home culture and reject the unfamiliar school culture, including its academic components and goals," says Muriel Hamilton-Lee (1988).

Schools need to know the families of their students in order to use the strength of the families in helping children succeed, especially in schools that serve urban, poor minority, educationally disadvantaged, or culturally diverse students and families (Epstein, 1992). In 1987, Epstein strongly encouraged state departments to foster meaningful parent involvement programs in schools by providing both financial and technical support.

Based on empirical findings, the Illinois State Board of Education has begun to emphasize the importance of family/school connections and their impact on the academic and social development of children. Schools were encouraged to apply for grants for programs which would apply the five elements of Epstein's (1987) model of parent involvement (Chapman, 1991). These elements are: (1) the basic obligation of family in terms of being responsible for children's safety, health, supervision, discipline, guidance, and learning at home, (2) the basic obligation of school to communicate with parents regarding their child's program and progress, (3) parent involvement at school as volunteers at school events, activities, and school performances, (4) parent involvement in learning activities and skills at home to facilitate children's classroom learning, and (5) parent involvement in school decision making, governance, and advocacy.

Goals 2000, the education reform bill signed March 31, 1994, provides resources to states and communities "to develop comprehensive education reforms." This law has ten titles/components; the eighth component states, "Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children." Goals 2000 makes parent/family involvement in their children's education a national priority. It recognizes the importance of parents and families as active participants in children's learning. Goals 2000 is also voluntary. States do not have to participate in implementing these goals, but those that do will receive federal funding.

Chapter 1 has always required the involvement of parents, and the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments of 1988 reaffirmed this commitment. In 1988, the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Educational Act (ESEA) Chapter 1 program took effect as Public Law 100-297. The law focused on parents becoming more involved in the education of their children. It urged that parents learn how to assist their children at home to meet the instructional objectives of the Chapter 1 program.

Parental involvement was defined in the statute as the building of a "partnership" between home and school. Schools have the responsibility to help parents help their children. In turn, parents of participant children are expected to cooperate with the schools by becoming knowledgeable about ESEA Chapter 1 goals and activities and by working to reinforce their children's learning at home.

This study will look at: (1) Chapter 1 parents' involvement at school, in Chapter 1 programs, and at home; (2) the extent ESEA Chapter 1 programs were successful in increasing parental involvement in the above areas; and (3) the impact of this parental involvement on parents themselves and consequently on their children.

METHOD

Subjects and Procedure:

In 1994, an *ESEA Chapter 1 Elementary School Parent Survey* was prepared by the Department of Research, Evaluation and Planning and mailed to one-third of the ESEA Chapter 1 schools selected to be evaluated. Each school received three to six copies of the survey to give to parents of ESEA Chapter 1 students. The survey was also mailed to a sample of parents who visited the Parent Resource Service Center located at the Central Office. A total of 212 parents from 96 schools responded. This sample represented all districts and all grade levels. Both English and Spanish versions of the survey were sent to schools; 9 percent of the returns were in Spanish.

ESEA Chapter 1 in the Chicago Public Schools includes four types of compensatory educational programs: *self-contained, pullout, pullout-in-class, and extended-day*. The number of students in these programs were 64, 111, 17, and 34, respectively. A brief description of these programs (as found in the *Guide for the Preparation of: The Local Elementary or High School Design for ESEA and State Chapter 1 Programs for Fiscal 1995, pp. 3-5)* follows:

- *Self-Contained/ Augmented Staffing.* In this organizational approach, a regular classroom at the same grade level is divided into two groups. For each regular class-size group of eligible ESEA Chapter 1 students, two teachers, one board-funded and one Chapter 1-funded, are assigned to provide both regular and remedial instruction. This approach differs significantly from the regular instruction program by reducing the regular class size and increasing the emphasis on individualization of instruction.

- *Pullout.* The Chapter 1 teacher provides special instruction to students in a resource room or other environment separate from the regular classroom for five days in a week. The length of the class period for lower grade levels should be at least 30 minutes and for higher grades (three and above) 40 minutes. The pullout approach provides instruction in reading or mathematics or both. Teachers take students from different classes and different grade levels.

- *Pullout-In-Class.* Specialized instructional services are provided to identified Chapter 1 students during their regular classes in the same classroom they share with non-Chapter 1 students. Chapter 1 teachers must focus on meeting the special needs of the Chapter 1 students, either individually or in small groups of students who have similar needs.

- *Extended-Day.* Supplementary instruction is provided directly preceding or following the regular instructional hours to small groups of eligible students. There are two types of extended-day programs: basic and supportive. In the basic program, students do not participate in the regularly scheduled ESEA Chapter 1 instructional activities, while in supportive extended-day programs, additional supplementary instruction is provided to students who are already participating in a basic ESEA Chapter 1 instructional approach. Students attend classes for a minimum of four days per week, 50 minutes per day.

The parent survey data were collected in the spring, with the assumption that by this time, parents had received enough training opportunities to interact and become involved with the school and with their children. Parents were asked to state their children's names and ID so that the students' achievement data could be matched with parents' responses. Since Chapter 1 is a federally funded program for schools, the parents in the survey represent low SES families.

Data were analyzed separately for all of the Chapter 1 programs in which the parents' children were enrolled. As the number of students in the pullout-in-class category was low, data for this group were not analyzed separately. Preliminary descriptive analysis, F-test (GLM-General Linear Models Procedure), Duncan-test, chi-square test, and zero-order correlations were used to explore the data.

Data Limitations

The findings of this study represent parents of ESEA Chapter 1 students in a large urban public school system. As ESEA Chapter 1 is a federally funded program for poverty-level schools, the parents in the survey represent low SES families with less educational background.

This sample may represent more involved parents. Schools may have given the survey to parents who had become familiar as frequent visitors to the school or who were considered more accessible. This is true for parents who were known to have attended Parent Resource Service Center activities at the Central Office.

Measures

Independent Variables:

Parent Involvement Indices

The indices used to assess aspects of parental involvement were: attendance at Chapter 1 conferences and parent training, volunteer service to Chapter 1, communication with Chapter 1 teachers, and intellectual/cognitive interaction with their own ESEA Chapter 1 children. All of the indices were rated by parents on a scale from 1 (never) to 4 (frequently).

Attendance at Chapter 1 Conferences

Two items asked about the frequency of parents' attendance to state and regional Chapter 1 conferences.

Attendance at Chapter 1 Parent Training Events

Three items measured the frequency of parents' participation in the parent training workshops provided by Chapter 1, the Parent Resource Service Center, and the Local Parent Advisory Council.

Providing Volunteer Services to Chapter 1

Two items measured the extent of parental volunteer services to Chapter 1 classrooms and chaperoning of Chapter 1 students on field trips.

Communicating with Chapter 1 Teachers

Two items measuring communication included parents discussing their children's progress and behavior with Chapter 1 teachers and visiting the classroom.

Involvement in Intellectual and Cognitive Activities with Their Children

Extent of the parents' engagement in intellectual and cognitive activities was assessed in the following four areas:

Checking and Assisting with Homework

Five items measured the frequency of parents' involvement with their children's homework in terms of checking to learn whether the child had received homework, helping with it, checking to find out whether the homework had been completed, talking with the child about school work, and finding out what he/she does in school.

Reading

Parents were asked whether they read to their child or have their child read to them.

Discussing

Parents were asked whether they discuss books that their children read, attend activities together, and watch TV together and discuss programs viewed.

Field Trips and Other Activities

Parents were asked whether they take their children to activities such as museums, concerts, sports events, etc.

In addition, the impact of the ESEA Chapter 1 parent training workshops on parental involvement and the importance of parental involvement in increasing parents' ability in various areas were assessed.

Four items were used to assess the impact of the ESEA Chapter 1 workshops on parents in terms of their being academically involved with their children at home, understanding the Chapter 1 program and its requirements, improving their relationship with school and Chapter 1 teachers, and being involved in Chapter 1 program planning and implementation.

The study investigates the effectiveness of ESEA Chapter 1 parent involvement programs in increasing parents' participation in the Parent Advisory Council; helping parents understand the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of Chicago's ESEA Chapter 1 programs; making parents aware of the federal requirements of parental involvement; and helping parents understand their children's needs and improve their ability to help their children with school work. These items were rated by parents on a dichotomous scale of *yes* or *no*.

Dependent Variables:

Students' Achievement

Students' 1994 Iowa Tests of Basic Skills scores in reading and mathematics reported in NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent) were used.

Attendance

Students' attendance was calculated by dividing days absent by total days present and absent and then multiplied by 100. Data for both of the dependent variables were obtained from the Central Office.

Findings and Discussion

Chapter 1 teachers can play an important role in parental involvement. They are responsible for communicating with parents regarding students' needs and academic progress, training parents to assist with the instructional process at home, and encouraging parents to visit the classroom and act as volunteers. ESEA Chapter 1 instruction follows several models: self-contained/augmented staffing, pullout, pullout-in-class, and extended-day. Data were analyzed for parents of the whole group of students regardless of program type and by each program separately. The intention was to find out whether student participation in a specific program model makes any difference in the degree of parental involvement.

The preliminary analysis examined the means and standard deviations of each item measuring parental involvement. This analysis will indicate the levels and variances of items measuring parental involvement across three groups (self-contained, pullout, and extended-day) (see Tables 1 and 2).

TABLE 1
Mean Ratings for Parents' Involvement With Chapter 1

	Self-Contained N=64		Pullout N=111		Extended-Day N=34	
Parent Involvement Activities	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
Chapter 1 Conferences						
	N=57		N=104		N=28	
- Attended ESEA Chapter 1 state conferences	1.6	1.0	1.4	.82	1.5	.74
	N=55		N=102		N=26	
- Attended ESEA Chapter 1 regional conferences	1.7	1.2	1.7	1.1	1.5	.95
Chapter 1 Parent Training						
	N=55		N=105		N=30	
- Attended ESEA Chapter 1 parent training workshops	2.6	1.2	2.6	1.2.	2.3	1.0
	N=57		N=104		N=29	
- Attended ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Resource Service Center	1.7	1.0	1.7	.99	1.6	.98
	N=58		N=105		N=28	
- Attended Local Parent Advisory Council	2.4	1.3	2.5	1.2	2.3	1.2
Volunteer Service to Chapter 1						
	N=56		N=103		N=28	
- Volunteered in Chapter 1 class	2.4	1.4	2.2	1.2	2.2	1.2
	N=56		N=103		N=29	
- Chaperoned on Chapter 1 field trip(s)	2.5	1.3	2.3	1.3	2.6	1.3
Communicating with Chapter 1 Teacher						
	N=58		N=108		N=29	
- Discussed my child's progress and/or behavior with Chapter 1 teacher	3.5	.73	3.2	1.0	3.3	.86
	N=54		N=107		N=29	
- Visited my child's Chapter 1 class	3.5	.77	3.1	99	3.0	1.1

Means are based on a scale of 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Occasionally; 4=Frequently.

TABLE 2
Mean Ratings for Parents' Intellectual and Cognitive Involvement With Their Own ESEA Chapter 1 Children

	Self-Contained N=64		Pullout N=111		Extended-Day N=34	
Parent Involvement Activities	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
Checking homework						
	N=59		N=103		N=28	
- Check to see that my child has homework from Chapter 1*	3.7[a]	.58	3.2[b]	1.1	3.4	.88
	N=60		N=108		N=31	
- Talk with my child about his/her school work*	3.9[a]	.5	3.9[a]	.41	3.5[b]	.72
	N=59		N=108		N=30	
- Help my child with homework	3.8	.46	3.7	56	3.6	.63
	N=60		N=108		N=31	
- Find out from my child about what he/she does in school*	3.8[a]	.38	3.8[a]	.40	3.5[b]	.72
	N=60		N=108		N=30	
- Check to see that homework is completed	3.9	.43	3.8	.44	3.7	52
Reading						
	N=59		N=107		N=30	
- Read to my child*	3.4[a]	.68	3.2	.72	2.9[b]	.96
	N=60		N=108		N=30	
- Have my child read to me	3.4	.78	3.4	71	3.1	.99
Discussion						
	N=59		N=107		N=30	
- Discuss with my child the books he/she has read*	3.6[a]	.62	3.5	.59	3.2[b]	.96
	N=59		N=107		N=31	
- Discuss with my child the activities attended together	3.5	.68	3.4	.70	3.3	.94
	N=60		N=108		N=31	
- Watch TV with my child and discuss the program	3.7	.66	35	.74	3.4	1.0
Field trips and other outside activities						
	N=60		N=108		N=31	
- Take my child to the movies, museums, concerts, sports events, etc.	3.4	.82	3.2	.82	3.0	.95

Note: *indicates F ratio exceeding the p=.05 level of statistical significance for differences among group means on a scale of 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Occasionally; 4=Frequently. For GLMs conducted for Table 2, a Duncan test (multiple comparisons test) was used to determine which group means differed from each other by statistically significant margins. The [a] and [b] indicate means differing by statistically significant margins from each other (e.g., for the item "Talk with my child about his/her school work," self-contained group mean is significantly different from extended-day group mean; and pullout group mean is significantly different from extended-day group mean).

Parents' ratings of the frequency of their attendance at Chapter 1 conferences, parent training workshops, and providing volunteer services to Chapter 1 were low (means less than 2.5 in a scale from 1 [never] to 4 [frequently]). High ratings (mean of more than 3) were given to communicating with the Chapter 1 teachers to check their children's progress; visiting their children's classroom; interacting with their children at home in terms of checking their homework and helping them with it; reading to them; discussing books, activities, programs; and taking them to museums, concerts, and other activities.

GLM-General Linear Models Procedure was used to determine whether there is any significant difference among the group means for each parental involvement index (if the difference was significant, it was noted with *). There was no significant difference among the group means for any one of the parental involvement indices in Table 1. In Table 2, significant differences among groups appeared for five items: check to see that my child has received homework from Chapter 1 (p=.002), talk with my child about his/her school work (p=.005), find out from my child about what he/she does in school (p=.01), read to my child (p<.02), and discuss with my child the books he/she has read which was barely significant (p=.06).

To indices that showed a significant difference among the means, the Duncan test was used to identify which group's mean differed significantly from others (^{a} and ^{b} notations were used to identify which means differed significantly from each other). The findings in Table 2 showed that the self-contained group mean differed significantly from the extended-day group means on items: "talk with my child about his/her school work"; "find out from my child about what he/she does in school"; "read to my child"; and "discuss with my child the books he/she has read." The mean ratings for the self-contained group were higher. The self-contained group mean differed significantly from the pullout group mean on item "check to see that my child has homework from Chapter 1". The mean rating for the self-contained group was higher.

The pullout group mean differed significantly from the extended-day group mean on two items: "talk with my child about his/her school work" and "find out from my child about what he/she does in school." The mean ratings for the extended-day group were higher.

These mean comparisons show that ratings were high for the self-contained, pullout, and extended-day groups, respectively. One explanation could be that teachers in self-contained classrooms have more contact with parents than in other programs because they are assigned fewer students and they are the students' regular teacher. These teachers have the opportunity for more frequent and diverse interaction with students and their parents. Given the above considerations, the self-contained Chapter 1 teachers can play a significant role in involving parents in school. Epstein & Dauber (1991) also found that self-contained classroom teachers report stronger programs and practices of parental involvement than teachers in departmentalized classrooms.

In extended-day programs, 70 percent of the students were at grade four and above. It is likely that parents of these older students, because of their own educational limits, may be feeling less confident about helping their children with more difficult school work. Also, extended-day teachers communicate less with parents to make parents aware of their children's needs and academic progress. It also appears that these parents do not receive from extended-day teachers necessary training on how to help their children.

Overall, these findings show that direct parental involvement at the school level across all three groups is low. Conferences, workshops, and volunteering require free time usually during the school day, and it becomes difficult for working parents to participate in these ways. These findings are consistent with a number of other studies which report less parental involvement at the school level (Bauch, 1988; Comer, 1980; Dauber & Epstein, in press; Dombusch & Ritter, 1988; Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Zigler & Turner,

1982). A very small number of parents are active at school, over 60% work full-time or part-time during the school day, and over 70% never volunteer (Epstein, 1986). Direct involvement is more difficult for single working mothers whose numbers are increasing faster than those of other parents (Epstein, 1988). As it is difficult for most parents to find time during the day, parents are more likely to spend the time they have helping their children on school work at home (Epstein, 1990; Herrick & Epstein, 1991).

Impact on Parents:

Active parental involvement can lead to improved parental knowledge about child development, parenting skills, and the quality of parent-child, parent-parent, and parent-teacher interactions and relationships (Epstein, 1992). At the elementary level, Epstein stated that 90% of parents want to help their children and they want schools to tell them how to help at home (Dauber & Epstein, in press; Epstein, 1986). Most parents want to help, but they do not know whether they are doing what is right, especially parents of children in the middle grades. Parents need knowledge about the instructional program in order to be able to help their children (Dauber & Epstein, in press; Leitch & Tangri, 1988). Grolnick & Slowiaczek (1994) found that by providing motivational resources parental involvement had an indirect effect on children's performance. Students' attitudes and beliefs about themselves in school are strong determinants of school success (Grolnick, 1990).

Chapter 1 legislation calls for involving parents in the design, implementation, and evaluation of Chapter 1 programs, and provides necessary training and materials to develop parents' capacity to improve their children's learning in the home and in the school.

As Table 3 shows, parents reported that the workshops and training helped them in assisting their children at home with school work, understanding the Chapter 1 program, and improving their rapport with school and Chapter 1 teachers. In contrast, parents' ratings of the impact of ESEA Chapter 1 training on the Chapter 1 program governance activities, such as planning, program design, and implementation, were low. Reasons for these responses may be that: (1) parents feel these activities are the school's responsibilities, or (2) parents are inhibited from doing them because of their own low educational attainment.

GLM procedure did not show any significant difference across the three groups in any of the above indices.

TABLE 3
Impact of ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Training Workshops on Parents

	Self-Contained N=64		Pullout N=111		Extended-Day N=34	
Parent Involvement	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
	N=50		N=93		N=25	
Able to work with their child at home to attain the instructional objectives	3.5	.61	3.3	.70	3.5	.85
	N=48		N=92		N=23	
Understand the program requirements	3.5	.58	3.3	.83	3.3	.70
	N=47		N=93		N=23	
Improved relationship with the school and/or the child's Chapter 1 teacher	3.6	.74	3.4	.79	3.4	.73
	N=45		N=91		N=23	
Able to assist with Chapter 1 program planning and implementation	2.8	1.0	2.9	1.1	2.8	1.1

Means are based on a scale of 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Occasionally; 4=Frequently.

The survey asked parents to state how their school's ESEA Chapter 1 parental involvement program increased their participation. Parents gave the highest rating to the program's effect on their interaction and relationships with their own children (see Table 4). Next in importance were parents' increased awareness of the federal requirements for parental involvement and understanding of the Chapter 1 program management. Parental involvement programs appeared to have the least impact on parents' participation in their local ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Advisory Council. These findings and the previous ones (Tables 1-3) show that despite efforts to motivate parents' involvement, especially at the school level, the level of parental involvement has not come up to expectations.

The chi-square test was applied to identify any significant differences among the groups for each of the indices, but the findings were not significant.

TABLE 4
Effectiveness of ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Involvement Program

	Self-Contained N=64 Frequency		Pullout N=111 Frequency		Extended-Day N=34 Frequency	
Parent Involvement activities increased parents':	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	%	%	%	%	%	%
	N=53		N=93		N=25	
Participation in the Parent Advisory Council	49	51	55	45	40	60
	N=55		N=90		N=26	
Understanding of the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of Chicago's ESEA Chapter 1 project	64	36	63	37	54	46
	N=54		N=89		N=28	
Awareness of the federal requirements for parental involvement	76	24	70	30	75	25
	N=57		N=97		N=28	
Understanding of child's needs	89	11	90	10	82	18
	N=56		N=94		N=28	
Ability to assist child with school work	88	12	87	13	93	7

Impact on Students:

Several studies have shown that parents' assistance at home has positive consequences for their children's achievement, attendance, and classroom behavior (Comer, 1980; Gotts, 1980; Rich, Van Dien, & Mattox, 1979). Henderson (1987) found that students at all grade levels benefited from family involvement. Flaxman & Inger (1991) stated that parental involvement improved student achievement, improved school attendance, and reduced dropout rates. These improvements occurred regardless of the economic, racial, or cultural background of the family.

Parents' visits to school and engagement in school-related activities may convey to the child the importance of school and of strategies for dealing with school (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994).

Parents are encouraged to expose their children to out-of-school activities such as attending museums, concerts, and sports events. Children develop self-esteem and personal growth through learning from their own experiences. Knowledge gained from these experiences is correlated with academic achievement (West & Mild, 1994).

Relationship Between Dependent and Independent Variables

Zero-order correlations were conducted between indices of parental involvement, impact of ESEA Chapter 1 parent training workshops, and effectiveness of ESEA Chapter 1 parent involvement as predictor variables with the dependent or outcome variables (reading, mathematics, and school attendance). This analysis was done for the groups together, and for each group separately.

No significant relationship between dependent and independent variables was found for the whole group. This is due to the homogeneity of parents' responses and students' achievement levels. When each group was examined separately, only a few positive and negative moderately significant correlations were found (see Tables 5 and 6).

For the extended-day group, there was only one significant negative correlation between parents' attendance at regional Chapter 1 conferences and their children's reading achievement ($r=-.44$, $p<.05$). Apparently, parents' reports of their frequent attendance at conferences did not give them the necessary information to help their children in reading.

TABLE 5
Zero-Order Correlations Between Independent and Dependent Items (Self-Contained Group)

	Reading	Mathematics	School Attendance
Attended local Parent Advisory Council			.42*
Used ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Resource Center	.45*		
Attended ESEA Chapter 1 State Conference		.56**	
Attended ESEA Chapter 1 Regional Service Conference	.51**		

*p ≤ .05. **p ≤ .01

TABLE 6
Zero-Order Correlations Between Independent and Dependent Items (Pullout Group)

	Reading	Mathematics	School Attendance
Attended local Parent Advisory Council		-.26* (N=62)	
Volunteered in Chapter 1 class		-.26* (N=60)	-.25* (N=66)
Visited Chapter 1 class			-.24* (N=69)
Used ESEA Chapter 1 Parent Resource Service Center	.32** (N=63)		

*p ≤ .05. **p.≤ .01

Lack of significant correlation between parents' intellectual and cognitive involvement with their children's achievement could be due to fewer variations in parents' ratings of their involvement and less variation in their children's achievement.

As Tables 5 and 6 show, the attendance of parents in both groups (self-contained and pullout) at the Parent Resource Service Center was significantly correlated with students' reading achievement. For the pullout group, as Table 6 shows, parents' frequent visiting and volunteering in Chapter 1 activities and classrooms probably did not enable them to help their children's academic development. In comparison, the self-contained group parents' participation at Chapter 1 conferences was positively related to their children's performance in reading and mathematics. An explanation could be that parents of self-contained students have more interaction with teachers, and the knowledge they gained at conferences is further elaborated and reinforced by the self-contained Chapter 1 teachers. Pullout teachers, on the other hand, may find it difficult to interact with a large number of parents. Furthermore, with the usually large number of students served in pullout classes overall, these teachers do not know students as well as the self-contained or regular classroom teachers. Parents' low educational attainment may also inhibit them from helping their children without receiving training and preparation. Since 70 percent of the students were at grade three and above, studies of poor and minority parents in Maryland, New England, and the Southwest, for instance, have found that parents care deeply about their children's education but may not know how to help (Reeves, 1988).

SUMMARY

The review of research provided enough evidence that both school and home are important institutions for socializing and educating children; therefore, these two institutions should share the responsibilities. Research findings have shown the importance of parents' SES and education on parent involvement on their children's education and consequently on their achievement (Coleman, 1987; Lareau, 1987; Useem, 1990). Other studies discussed that the process of this impact is mediated through parent involvement (Stevenson and Baker, 1987). Epstein (1992) found that family and school partnership practices are more important to children's success than family structures or ascriptive characteristics, such as race, social class, level of

parent education, marital status, income, language of family, family size, or age of child. The stronger the school/family partnership, the less these status variables seem to explain parental behavior or children's success. "The studies show, for example, that some Poor and minority parents are involved in their children's education, and that school and teachers' practices affect whether and how less educated parents are involved" (Epstein 1992, p. 16).

Parental involvement benefits children, teachers, and the parents themselves. Parental involvement may convey the message of school importance to their children which may in turn lead to more responsible and independent behavior in school (Epstein, 1988). Teachers report more positive feelings about teaching and about their school when there is more parental involvement (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Brissie, 1987; Leitch & Tangri, 1988). Teachers' self-confidence increases when they receive approval and appreciation from administrators and parents, which also enhances their sense of efficacy and their willingness to continue working with parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987). Parental involvement aligns home and school values and expectations and reduces the gap between them (Edwards and Young, 1992).

The present study focused on the parents of ESEA Chapter 1 students. These students receive compensatory education in one or more instructional formats: self-contained, pullout, pullout-in-class, and extended-day. Parents in this study were economically disadvantaged. ESEA Chapter 1 provides training for parents on the purpose of Chapter 1 programs, rules and requirements for parental involvement, working with their children at home, and building up relationships with the school to work cooperatively on educating their children.

The ESEA Chapter 1 Elementary School Parent Survey distributed in one third of the ESEA Chapter 1 schools which were selected to be evaluated for fiscal year 1994 and to parents who had visited the Parent Resource Center located at the Central Office. Respondents to the survey represent all Chicago public school districts and all grade levels.

This study looked at parents' views of their involvement with ESEA Chapter 1 programs, Chapter 1 teachers, and their children. Consistent with other studies cited earlier, this study found limited parent involvement at the school level and in Chapter 1 programs, which was true for parents of children in all Chapter 1 programs. No significant difference was found among the means of these groups. In contrast, once again, parents' ratings of their involvement at home were high.

Parental involvement efforts were more likely to increase parents' understanding of their children's needs rather than involve them in Chapter 1 program management and governance.

Comparing parents' ratings of children in the three types of Chapter 1 programs, the study shows parents of children in the self-contained program differed significantly from the extended-day group in regard to checking their children's homework, reading to them, and discussing with them. The Self-contained group also differed significantly from the pullout group in checking to find out whether the child had homework from Chapter 1 teachers. This difference was also true for the pullout and extended groups in checking their children's homework.

In a few cases, parental involvement was significantly correlated with their students' achievement. For example, parents' participation in Parent Resource Service Center functions correlated positively with their children's reading achievement. Parents' attendance at Chapter 1 conferences correlated significantly with their children's achievement for parents of self-contained students only.

In general, parents of self-contained program students were more involved in school and with their children than were parents of students in pullout and extended-day programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If families are so important in emotional and intellectual development of the child, how can schools enable more families, especially those parents who would not become involved on their own, to become and remain involved in their children's education? This study found less parental involvement with the school and with the ESEA Chapter 1 program than expected. However, parents rated highly their involvement at home. Most parents of Chicago Public Schools students are minorities and economically disadvantaged. Language and cultural background are the main barriers to involvement for immigrant families. Involving these parents is more complicated. The following suggestions may help in increasing parental involvement in meaningful ways:

- Teachers and school staff as well as parents should be prepared for parent/school partnerships. Teachers' attitudes play a large part in the academic success of at-risk children. Teachers who have low expectations for at-risk children or who believe that their parents do not care about their children, and do not want to be involved in their education, and view them as failures, will contribute to the children's failure.

- Families need to feel empowered, as is the intention of Chapter 1 and school reform. At-risk families feel powerless. They feel inhibited from participating mostly because of their low educational attainment. These families need training to prepare them to be part of their school's decision-making groups and to be involved in Chapter 1 program governance.

- Chapter 1 school staff, especially teachers, can play an important role in encouraging parental involvement by frequently making contact with parents and informing them about their children's needs and progress, helping parents to understand the purpose of Chapter 1 programs, and making parents aware of the importance of their role and involvement in Chapter 1 program management.

- Staff should be prepared so that everyone understands the community being served. Workshops and training should be sensitive to families' needs and cultural backgrounds..

- Information should be communicated to parents through various ways. It should be in a language that is understood by parents.

- Providing child care, transportation, interpreters, and meals would encourage greater parental participation.

- Workshops and activities should be scheduled at various times and in the evening so that working parents can attend.

- Topics covered in the training and workshops should meet parents' needs and have immediate application for them. When parents cannot help their children academically, they may become frustrated and feel that their attendance at Chapter 1 programs and training is not beneficial. They may then give up and leave the responsibility totally to the school to educate their children.

- Parental involvement should be initiated by the school because most parents want to be involved, but either they do not know the means, or they do not know their rights. For example, in Hispanic countries of origin, the roles of parents and schools were sharply divided. Most of the low-income Hispanic parents view the U.S. school system as "a bureaucracy governed by educated non-Hispanics whom they have no right to question" (Nicolau & Ramos, 1990, p. 13). This is also true for Asian culture. They respect authorities and rarely question them because it is considered impolite. Cultural differences may be misunderstood by most school administrators and teachers who will, as a result of that misunderstanding, consider those parents uncaring about their children's education and unwilling to be involved. These parents need to be asked, and they need to be instructed about how they can help.

Research Suggestions

- The impact of parental involvement is evident from various research findings, but more attention should be given to the process through which parental involvement affects children's development. More research is needed on the effects of specific processes and partnership practices.

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